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CENTRAL SCHOOL BOARDS IN SASKATCHEWAN

by

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Central School Boards in Saskatchewan" submitted by Peter P. Martins in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The central purpose of this study was to gain information regarding the formation of central boards, their relationships to unit boards, and the scope of their activities. Since it was desirable to secure information from both unit and central boards, six sub-problems were selected as guides to the determination of content of questionnaires sent to the boards.

Two questionnaires were distributed, one to unit boards and one to central boards. Conclusions reached in this study were based upon thirty-four pairs of useable questionnaire returns. Each pair consisted of returns from a unit board and one central board within the unit.

The main conclusions of the study were:

1. The majority of central boards were formed by persons selected from each rural district or from district boards comprising larger attendance areas.
2. The vast majority of central boards have been approved by the Minister of Education. Latest legislation has systemized and formalized their formation.
3. The bulk of duties performed by central boards consisted of those specified in the School Act. Minor numbers of central boards had undertaken or had been assigned further duties.
4. Central boards were generally confined to recommending courses of action for consideration of unit boards. Central board trustees reported that their advice had been influential in the formation of unit policies.

5. Unit board trustees valued the advisory service rendered by central boards.
6. Central boards expressed desire to have opportunity for more direct influence or control over local school affairs.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The province of Saskatchewan was formed in 1905. The early settlement pattern for the province was largely rural. The majority of farms were of one-quarter or half-section in size. The pattern of establishment of schools suited this rural pattern and the province was soon covered with a network of rural school districts, each approximately twenty square miles in size.

The School Unit

Rural school districts were established to serve pupils within walking distance of the school. The lack of sufficient pupils and qualified teachers often necessitated the closing of rural schools. The rapid advance in farm mechanization and change in rural living patterns further outmoded the facilities offered by the rural school. Adjustment to a new era was necessary.

The Changing Scene. As early as 1913 it was evident that the rural school no longer provided adequate facilities for education. The continuing changing organization of agricultural production and the decline of rural population with the migration of farm youth to urban centers, created further need for reorganization in the educational field. The mechanization of agriculture and the reduction of the farm labour force added new needs to be met by education. In addition, a higher standard of living and increased rural-urban interdependence

increased the demands for higher standards of education, for improved facilities, enriched curriculum, and for better preparation of farm people for a new role in a changing community. The rural school with its administrative facilities was not adequate to meet the new demands; provision had to be made to meet these new challenges.

Legislation in 1913 provided for the establishment of consolidated schools. By 1921[1] numerous small schools had been closed and the districts included in the consolidated school districts. This provided a means whereby rural schools with small enrolments could consolidate to provide enough pupils to improve the educational offerings of the consolidated school.

The Formation of Larger Units. The history of Saskatchewan is punctuated with reports of individuals, committees, and commissions advocating larger units for educational administration. In 1915 the Saskatchewan Education Commission[2] recommended to trustees that they take advantage of 1913 legislation providing for the establishment of consolidated school districts. In 1928 the School Act was ammended to permit the formation of Union Boards.[3] No Union districts were formed under the Union Act. Research committees of teachers and trustees recommended the establishment of a number of experimental units of administration. By 1940[4] no units were established. In 1944 the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Convention undertook the program to inform ratepayers of proposed larger units. Subsequently, in 1944 at a special session of the Legislature, the Government passed the Larger School Units

Act.[5] This provided for the introduction of larger units of school administration in Saskatchewan.

The introduction of the larger unit of administration in Saskatchewan brought about major change. The units were formed to provide adequate administrative and taxing units and to minimize inequalities in financing education among school districts. The legislation provided for the establishment of 56 larger units, each consisting of from 60 to 80 school districts.

The larger units provided for a solution for some problems that had beset the rural schools. Each unit had jurisdiction over a large pupil population as a base for educational planning. In recognition of the interdependence of rural and urban life, larger units also included all villages and a majority of town districts within their boundaries. These village and town districts were to be utilized to provide better facilities for children from rural areas.

Each larger unit was administered by a board of trustees. The unit was divided into five or six sub-units from each of which a trustee was elected to the unit board. Unit board trustees were given broad powers to administer the affairs of all schools within the unit. While district boards were still maintained by law, most of their powers and responsibilities were transferred to the unit board.

Operational change followed change in the administrative structure. The one-roomed rural schools began to disappear as their pupils were conveyed to larger schools usually situated in the town or village centrally located. The centralization of authority resulted, therefore,

in the closure of many small schools and the development of fewer larger schools with higher enrolments, more extensive programs, and generally improved instructional conditions.

The Status of Local Boards. When the Larger Units Act was passed, duties and powers for both local boards and unit boards were outlined in the Larger Units Act.[6] The individual school boards were charged with the responsibilities of caring for and managing the district property and for providing at unit expense the requirements of day-to-day operation. The district board also had the privilege of requesting the provision at its own expense of equipment not normally provided by the unit board. Thus the duties and powers of the district boards pertained largely to the stewardship of local property while the unit boards were responsible for general educational policy and provision of facilities. This left many district boards with no duties or responsibilities as their schools had been closed and the children conveyed to schools operating in other districts.

This situation may have contributed to apathy on the part of local boards, and to the feeling that there was little use for their existence.[7]

The Issue

The solution of problems related to the size of both administrative and attendance areas and the creation of a new problem of insufficient local involvement has been documented in literature.

The establishment of a link in communication between central and

local authorities was recommended by Rideout:

> Not only should an administrative organization be such as to provide for direct channels between ratepayers and policymaker, but boards must build into their policy making machinery whereby local citizens are kept informed of what is going on and why; and are involved and enabled to make their contributions and suggestions to the ultimate plan.[8]

Carpenter,[9] asserted that too high a degree of centralization further removed the schools from the control of the local districts.

The central board therefore filled the felt need for local participation in the central school of the larger attendance area. It provided a link between the operating school and the non-operating school districts. Through the central board ratepayers and local district board members were able to take an active interest in the operating school in their area.

The Ontario Royal Commission noted both the desirability of larger school units and the need to retain local involvement by commenting that:

> We have accepted as a basic principle that the control of education must not be removed too far from the local community. Basic units for both post elementary and public elementary education must be considerably larger than the attendance area of one school in order to satisfy certain other criteria, but the maintenance of local interest is so vital that it must not be sacrificed. In order that members of the board may be informed of specific local needs and desires, some type of committee or board for each school or group of schools, exercising at least advisory powers, would serve a useful purpose. Such committees or boards would tend to keep alive local interest in education and to organize and promote local support for all activities of the school.[10]

The Commission went on to say:

> It seems to us self evident that in a democratic society the administration of education should be a partnership between the central and local authorities; our problem then is to determine what aspects should be centralized in the name of efficiency,

> economy, and equity of educational opportunity, and what shall be decentralized in the name of democratic local control over education and provision for growth through centralization.[11]

Ratepayers and board members in Saskatchewan expressed a desire for more direct participation and influence in the operation of the schools attended by their children.[12] The establishment of central boards provided for an opportunity for local participation.

Central Boards

The early days of larger school units in Saskatchewan produced similar concern that local involvement in education was hampered by the transfer of powers from boards of many component districts to the unit board. It was to have been expected that some form of local board would be re-established.

Legislation. By an enactment of the legislature in 1953 with subsequent amendments in 1955, the Minister of Education was authorized to make regulations for the establishment of central boards. Subsequently regulations were drafted stating that a central board of trustees would consist of:

> (1) The members of the board of the operating district and one other member of the board of each of the contiguous districts in which the school is not operating and from which children attend the operating school;
>
> or
>
> (2) Three, five, seven, or nine members elected or appointed by the boards of trustees of the districts to be represented on the

central board.

In the year 1958 Department of Education officials met with the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association executive to consider revisions to the regulations for the establishment of central boards. A few significant changes were suggested, among which were:

(1) The deletion of the word contiguous. Districts represented on central boards would not necessarily have to be contiguous districts as was the case in earlier regulations.

(2) The provision that operating districts from which pupils were conveyed to a central school would be represented on the central board.

(3) A further provision enabling the establishment of central boards by any method other than those set out in the regulations, if the unit board so recommended, subject to the approval of the minister.

Legislation governing the establishment and operation of central boards was last modified and defined in section 237 of the School Act,[13] as follows:

> (1) Subject to the approval of the minister, the boards of any group of two or more districts included in a school unit, and the board of the school unit, may, in accordance with the regulations under clause (h) of paragraph 1 of section 3, establish a central board of trustees for the administration, control, and supervision of such districts.
>
> (2) A majority of the members of a board established under subsection (1) shall constitute a quorum.

Regulations. This enabling legislation was accompanied by regulations setting out the following details:

1. A central board of trustees:

(a) May consist of the members of the board of the central school district to which pupils are conveyed and one member of the board of trustees of each district in which the school is not operating and from which children attend the central school.

(b) May consist of the members of the board of the central districts to which pupils are conveyed and one member of the board of trustees of each district in which the school is not operating and from which children attend the central school, and, where pupils are conveyed to the central school from an operating district, one member of the board of trustees from each such district.

(c) May consist of 3, 5, 7, or 9 members elected or appointed by the boards of trustees of the districts from which pupils attend the central school.

(d) May be established by such other procedures for determining the method of nomination and election, and fixing the number of central board members, and determining their term of office, as outlined and recommended by the unit board and approved by the department.

2. A central board of trustees shall not be established except with the approval of the minister.

3. A majority of the members of the central board shall constitute a quorum.

4. Except as provided in 1 (d) the term of office of each central board member shall be one year.

Duties and Responsibilities. A central board has the same powers as the local school district board established under the School Act, except that it cannot elect delegates to the provincial School Trustees' Convention. Decisions made by the central board, provided they are within the powers of a local district board as laid down in the Act,[14] are binding upon all districts represented on the central board, and do not require the approval of the local school districts. The duties of trustees were treated further in Section 47 of the Larger Unit Act, as follows:[15]

It shall be the duty of the board of trustees:

(1) to appoint a chairman and an honorary secretary-treasurer;

(2) subject to any regulations of the unit board to care for and manage the property of the school district.

(3) to cooperate with the teacher in the care, management, and supervision of school property, and subject to any regulations of the unit board and at the cost of the unit, to effect any emergency repairs thereto which may be necessary and to report the facts forthwith to the secretary of the unit.

(4) to make recommendations to the board of the unit as to the maintenance, repair, and extension of the school and other equipment of the district and any furniture and equipment therein.

(5) to require the unit board to furnish at the expense of the district necessary apparatus or equipment for the school of the district, which is not ordinarily provided by the unit board for the schools in the unit.

(6) at the cost of the unit, to make arrangements for the supply and maintenance of drinking water and of fuel for the school of the district, which is prescribed by the unit board, and to cause the same to be duly carried out.

(7) to make representations to the superintendent and to the unit board as to the betterment or extension of the educational facilities for residents of the districts.

(8) if it so desires, to nominate by resolution one or more persons for the employment by the board as teacher in the school of the district.

(9) to hold meetings for the consideration of any matter of educational concern to the district, and to call annual and other meetings to the ratepayers of the district when required to do so by law.

(10) to elect one or more delegates as required by section 12.

(11) to perform such other duties as may be required by this or any other Act or the regulations of the Department of Education.

The Present Situation. The number of central boards organized in the province has increased steadily since 1953. Up to the time this survey was made, a total of 126 central boards had been organized. Table I following indicates the number of boards formed during the years 1953-1959.

TABLE I

GROWTH IN NUMBERS OF CENTRAL BOARDS

Year	No. of Central Boards Formed
1953	5
1954	10
1955	9
1956	11
1957	34
1958	47
1959	10
Total	126

Purpose for the Study

Since the formation of central boards in 1953, little effort has been made to gather information regarding the usual methods by which they were formed, the nature of their membership, and the duties they were in fact performing. This situation suggested the need for this study.

The Problem

The central purpose of this study was to gain information regarding the formation of central boards, their relationships to unit boards, and the scope of their activities. Since it was desirable to secure information from both unit and central boards, six sub-problems were selected as guides to the determination of content of questionnaires sent to the boards.

Sub-Problems

1. How many central boards existed with the formal approval of the Minister of Education?
2. What was the nature of the relationship which unit boards thought they had with central boards?
3. What did unit boards think central boards did?
4. How did residents of an attendance area select the members of central boards?
5. What did the members of central boards think their relationship was

to the unit board?

6. What did the members of central boards think they were doing?

Each of these sub-problems became the subject of emphasis of an appropriate section of the questionnaires.

Definition of Terms

Local Board. This is the term used to indicate the board of trustees of a school district as defined in the School Act.

Central Board. The term central board designates the board of a central school.

Unit Board. This term is used to designate the board of a larger unit.

Central School. This is the term used to indicate an operating school to which pupils from surrounding districts are conveyed.

Organization of Remainder of Thesis

Chapter II will provide a description of the procedure used to gather data as a basis upon which to answer the questions contained in the sub-problems. Reference will be made to the questionnaire and to the sample boards to whom these were sent.

Chapter III will present the information collected by the questionnaires.

A summary and interpretation of the findings will be dealt with in the final chapter of this thesis.

REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER I

[1]Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, Toronto: Kings Printer, 1950, p. 260.

[2]Report of the Saskatchewan Education Commission, Regina, 1915.

[3]Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1912-13, C.35, S.1.

[4]Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life, No. 6. Rural Education, Regina: Queen's Printer, 1957.

[5]Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1944, C.41.

[6]Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1953, C.170, SS.47-56.

[7]The School Trustee, The Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association, Vol. 17, No. 8, April, 1947, p. 6.

[8]E. B. Rideout, "Saskatchewan Looks at Some Key Problems in Rural Education," Canadian Education, XII, March, 1955, p. 40.

[9]C. C. Carpenter, "Characteristics of a Satisfactory Administrative Unit," American School Board Journal, 117, D.48, p. 27.

[10]Royal Commission, Ontario, op. cit., p. 178.

[11]Ibid., p. 197.

[12]Royal Commission, Saskatchewan, op. cit.

[13]The Saskatchewan School Act, Queen's Printer, Regina, 1959.

[14]The Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1953, C.169, S.47.

[15]Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, C.170, S.47.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES

This chapter will present information regarding the questionnaires and the selection of boards to whom the questionnaires were sent.

The Questionnaires

As noted earlier (see page 11) six sub-problems became the chief focus of items which comprised the questionnaires. Sub-problems 1, 2, and 3 suggested matters which were emphasized in sections B, C, and D, respectively, of the instrument prepared for unit boards (Questionnaire 1). Sub-problems 4, 5, and 6 were emphasized in sections B, C, and D, respectively, of the instrument prepared for central boards (Questionnaire 2). Each questionnaire also contained a section A, chiefly for purposes of identification, and a Section D which encouraged free response on matters not adequately treated by earlier sections.

Each questionnaire, consequently, consisted of five parts.

Part A. This part of the instrument was included primarily for purposes of identification of the respondent, but it was also used to ascertain the number of members on each central board and the year of its formation.

Part B. As there were a number of alternatives under the legal provisions for creating central boards, this section sought to elicit information on the matter in which a particular central board came into being.

Part C. This section of each instrument attempted to ascertain relationships between central boards and unit boards. Legally, only certain duties as outlined by the School Act fell within the jurisdiction of central boards. In some cases, however, unit boards had assigned or permitted central boards to assume wider powers. This section attempted to discover the relationship, as seen by each type of board, that existed between the boards.

Part D. This section of the instrument sought information on the specific activities of central boards. Both unit and central boards were asked to designate these activities. The questionnaire also sought to establish the suitability of central board activities as seen by both central and unit boards.

The two questionnaires were prepared and presented to two central boards and to two unit boards for a trial run. These trial returns and the items of the questionnaires were discussed with the trial respondents, as a consequence of which modifications were made.

The Sample

A preliminary survey of the number and distribution of central boards indicated that at least one central board was to be found in each of the 56 units. In total, 126 central boards existed at the time this study commenced.

In the cases of many units, more than one central board existed. The question was, how many central boards in a given unit should become subjects of the study? The assumption was made that a given unit board

probably would have established a common relationship with all its central boards. The decision was made that questionnaires would be sent to each unit board and, in cases of units where more than one central board existed, to two central boards. Thus, at least one central board was polled, and in some cases two, in each unit.

CHAPTER III

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

This chapter will report, analyze, and interpret the data provided by the questionnaires.

Each questionnaire consisted of five parts. Each part of the questionnaires will be dealt with separately in the remainder of this chapter.

PART A

This part of the questionnaires was used for identification purposes as well as to reveal the sizes of central boards.

The Returns

One questionnaire was sent to each unit board and the other questionnaire was sent to 100 central boards known to be established within these school units.

Thirty-four unit boards returned completed questionnaires. This represented a return of 60 per cent. Sixty central boards, or 60 per cent of those to whom questionnaires were sent, returned completed questionnaires.

All returns of unit boards were used in the survey. The use of returns of central boards, however, was limited to those cases in which the central boards were located in one of the thirty-four responding units. Consequently, not all returns from central boards were used.

The result of this "matching" was that questionnaires from thirty-four unit boards and from thirty-four central boards provided the data used in this survey. The writer decided that this sample would be sufficient for purposes of generalizing.

PART B

This section of each questionnaire sought information on the numbers of existing central boards and on the process by which they had been established. The questionnaire sent to central boards set forth the various possibilities of formation, the appropriate one of which was to be checked by each central board. Additionally, the questionnaire sent to unit boards solicited information regarding the number of central boards and the attitudes of unit trustees to the existence of central boards.

Central Board Replies

The questions asked in Part B of the questionnaire and the frequencies of responses of central boards are reported in Table II. Four possible means were suggested whereby central boards might have been established.

Responses indicated that the prevalent means of selecting members for the central boards was method (b) (13 responses). Nine boards were formed using method (a), while 5 and 7 boards, respectively, used methods (c) and (d).

Since there was no statutory directive governing the exact means whereby central boards could be formed, it was to have been expected that a variety of methods would be used. The questionnaire results have borne out this expectation.

TABLE II

FORMATION OF CENTRAL BOARDS

Various Means of Formation	No. of Responses
(a) Choosing one representative from each rural district represented in the Larger Attendance Area	9
(b) Choosing one trustee from each local board in the Larger Attendance Area	13
(c) Choosing the chairman of each local board within the Larger Attendance Area	5
(d) Election by ratepayers in each school district within the Larger Attendance Area	7
(e) Other means not specified, specify	-

Unit Board Responses

This part of the questionnaire revealed how many central boards were established and the initiating force for establishment. The specific questions and the frequency of responses to them are indicated in Table III.

TABLE III

ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL BOARDS

Part B Questions to Unit Boards	The Numbers Reported
(a) How many central boards are established within the boundaries of your unit?	96* range from 1 to 12 per unit
(b) How many of these central boards are legally constituted, that is, with the approval of the Minister of Education?	94* range from 1 to 12 per unit
(c) In cases where approval was not sought do you concur in the establishment of these boards?	Yes: 33 No: 1
(d) In all the above cases, did the requests that central boards be established come from:	
(i) the ratepayers?	3
(ii) the local school boards?	23
(iii) unit boards?	8
(iv) other (specify)?	-

* These numbers represent the number of Central Boards reported by all responding units re: questions (a) and (b).

A total of 96 central boards existed within the units responding to the questionnaire. The number of central boards existing within individual units varied greatly with a range of from one to twelve central boards per unit. Most units reported 3 or 4 central boards within their jurisdictions.

In the majority of cases the establishment of central boards was ratified by the Minister of Education. In only 2 cases did a central board exist without such formal approval.

The initiating forces behind the establishment of central boards came from three sources. Twenty-three unit boards indicated that the formation of central boards was initiated at the request of local school boards. In eight cases unit boards were the initiating force and in three cases the request came from ratepayers.

These data are significant in that they indicate that local boards, by and large, initiated the formation of central boards, probably as a means of achieving better representation in their respective areas. The questionnaire results indicated that local school district boards were interested in educational matters and took initial steps in having central boards formed.

PART C

This part of the questionnaire attempted to ascertain the way in which central boards obtained responsibilities and duties. Legally, only certain duties were intended for central boards but in many cases unit boards might have extended the duties of central boards or the latter might have assumed duties beyond the intent of legislation.

Central Board Responses

Central boards were asked to indicate the bases of authority within which they operated. The questions put to central boards and their responses to the questions are presented in Table IVa.

TABLE IVa

POWERS OF CENTRAL BOARDS

Part C Questions to Central Boards	Responses	
	Yes	No
(a) Did the larger unit board designate specific duties and responsibilities to the central board?	9	26
(b) Are the duties and powers of the central boards consistent with Sec.114, the School Act?	26	9
(c) Has the central board any other specific area of responsibility of power? If so, what?	14	20
(d) Has the central board access to any funds to be used at its discretion? If so, where are these obtained?	9	26

Of the 34 boards reporting, nine had specific areas of responsibility delegated to them by the unit boards. In the majority of cases, 26 in number, duties and powers fell within the range of activities specified in Sec. 114, The School Act.

Fourteen boards indicated that they had assumed other responsibilities which were not expressly laid down for them by the unit boards or Sec. 114, of the School Act. These were areas of responsibility which the boards had taken upon themselves with the apparently tacit consent of unit boards. These responsibilities included selecting bus drivers, planning bus routes, and keeping bus routes passable. In one

case the supervision of the janitor had been assumed by a central board.

In response to the question on funds available, nine boards answered in the affirmative. Funds available to them came from various sources. Two received grants of $25.00 from the unit board, three applied a levy of ½ mil on their respective districts, and four received a grant of $50.00 from the unit board.

The questionnaire results indicated that the sources of powers and responsibilities of central boards varied from place to place, as did their relationships with unit boards.

Unit Board Replies

The unit boards were asked to respond to questions which were similar in emphasis to those placed before central boards. The questions and the responses are tabulated in Table IVb.

From unit board replies it was noted that nine boards had duties and responsibility areas specifically designated by the unit boards. The majority of the unit boards agreed, however, that the duties and responsibilities of their operating central boards fell within section 114 of the School Act.

Twenty-eight unit boards replied that their central boards had other areas in which they took an interest and had assumed responsibilities which were not specifically designated or outlined for them.

Thirty-one unit boards indicated that they did not provide financial help or assistance to central boards. Of the three that did, the amounts ranged from $25.00 to $50.00

TABLE IVb

POWERS OF CENTRAL BOARDS

Part C Questions to Unit Boards	Responses	
	Yes	No
(a) Did the unit board designate powers and specific responsibilities to the central board?	9	25
(b) Are the duties and powers of the central boards consistent with those specified in Sec. 114, The School Act?	28	6
(c) Have the central boards assumed any other areas of specific responsibilities?	28	6
(d) Have central boards access to any funds to be used at their discretion?	4	30
(e) Does the unit board provide a grant to the operating central boards to be used at their discretion? If so, how much?	3	21

There is some difference in responses of unit boards and central boards in the area of responsibility and powers.

PART D

This part of the questionnaire dealt with the duties performed by central boards. The various duties became the subjects of questions which could be answered "yes" or "no". Provision was also made for boards to respond "yes" or "no" regarding the desirability of duties being performed by central boards.

Central Board Replies

Since in most cases central boards operated within Sec. 114 of the School Act, and since in some cases additional duties might have been allocated to central boards, the questions were designed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of what central boards were actually doing and what they thought they should be doing. Data are presented in Table V. The letters appearing in Column I correspond to the following questionnaire items:

(a) Does the central board hold regular meetings?

Twenty-six replied in the affirmative and in eight cases responses were negative. The opinion of the majority was that regular meetings should be held and in most cases this was being done.

(b) Are members of the unit board invited to or informed of meetings?

Twenty-seven replies in this instance were positive while seven were to the contrary.

(c) Does the board hold meetings in accordance with the School Act?

Twenty-nine central boards indicated that this was so, while five answered "no" to this question.

(d) Does the board visit the school regularly to ascertain its needs?

Thirty boards replied in the affirmative and four answered in the negative. The responses indicated that central boards did take an

TABLE V

CENTRAL BOARD DUTIES REPORTED BY CENTRAL BOARDS

Question	Responses Regarding Performance		Responses Regarding Desirability	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
(a)	26	8	24	4
(b)	27	7	25	3
(c)	29	5	26	2
(d)	30	4	27	1
(e)	30	4	27	1
(f)	31	3	27	1
(g)	21	13	25	3
(h)	21	13	22	6
(i)	32	2	28	0
(j)	19	15	22	6
(k)	29	5	26	2
(l)	15	22	16	12
(m)	10	24	14	14
(n)	24	10	26	2
(o)	29	5	24	4
(p)	12	22	21	7
(q)	30	4	24	4
(r)	32	2	28	0

interest in the activities and conditions of their respective schools.

(e) Does the board nominate teachers for the school?

Thirty boards answered "yes" to this question, while four answered "no". The majority of central boards were taking an active interest in the staffing of their schools.

(f) Does the unit board respect these nominations?

The thirty-one affirmative replies were indicative of the close harmony between central and unit boards on this question.

(g) Does your board nominate bus drivers serving your school?

Twenty-one replied "yes" while thirteen replied "no". The responses indicated that a major percentage of central boards were permitted to select potential drivers of buses serving their particular areas.

(h) Does the unit board retain drivers thus nominated?

In the twenty-one cases that replied "yes" to the previous question the reply was again in the affirmative, but thirteen cases again replied "no".

(i) Does your board repair and suggest repairs to school property?

Thirty-two boards were permitted to suggest repairs and alterations to be made in the centralized school. In a few cases, boards indicated that they were permitted to make minor repairs or had the authority to have these repairs made locally. Two boards replied "no" to this question.

(j) Does your board nominate the janitor for the centralized school?

Nineteen boards were allowed this responsibility. Twenty-two boards indicated that they thought they should have this responsibility. Fifteen boards were not permitted this task.

(k) Does the unit board act upon such nominations?

All boards who replied "yes" to the previous question answered "yes" to this question. Ten other boards also replied "yes" although they had replied "no" to the previous question.

(l) Does your board specify and order supplies and equipment?

Twenty-nine replied in the affirmative and thus indicated clearly that this responsibility came well within the jurisdiction of the central boards.

(m) Do you as a board provide extra playground facilities over and above those supplied by the unit board?

This was the first question in which the negative responses outnumbered the positive ones. Ten boards only replied "yes". Fourteen boards indicated that they thought this should be their responsibility. Twenty-four boards indicated no local action in this area and fourteen indicated that they should not have any.

(n) Do you as a board participate in planning new buildings and choosing school sites?

Twenty-four boards had opportunity to participate in planning while ten had no opportunity in this regard. Twenty-six boards, out of a total of twenty-eight replies, indicated that they should have this responsibility.

(o) Do you control school property with respect to the use of

same for community activities?

Twenty-nine boards indicated that they had this control. Responses indicate that central boards did have jurisdiction over activities within their respective schools.

(p) Do you as a board provide leadership in the larger attendance area in activities such as Home and School, adult education, or in any others?

Twelve boards answered "yes" while twenty-two answered "no" to this question. In contrast to this, twenty-one indicated that they thought they should be providing leadership.

(q) Does your board act in an advisory capacity to the unit board?

Thirty boards indicated they advised unit board members on problems involving their respective areas.

(r) Does the unit board generally act on advice from the central board?

Thirty-two boards replied in the affirmative. This would suggest that central boards are influential in relation to decisions made by unit boards.

Unit Board Replies

In order to determine the reactions of unit boards as compared to those of central boards, similar and in many cases identical questions were asked of both parties. The responses are indicated in Table VI. Letters appearing in Column I correspond to the following questionnaire items:

(a) Does the central board hold regular meetings?

Twenty-six responded "yes", while eight replied "no".

(b) Are members of the unit board informed or invited to such meetings?

Twenty-one boards replied that they were and thirteen replied that they were not. Twenty-eight unit boards indicated that central boards should invite them to or inform them of central board meetings.

(c) Do central boards nominate teachers for their respective schools?

To this query twenty-four boards replied in the affirmative and ten indicated this was not the case. Twenty-six of thirty-four unit boards indicated that they thought this was a function of the central board.

(d) Do central boards nominate bus drivers serving their respective areas?

Twenty-one boards replied that this was done in their areas, while thirteen boards indicated that this was not the case.

(e) Does the unit board consider these nominations when selecting personnel?

Twenty-three boards replied "yes" while eleven replied "no". Two boards were obviously confused in their reply.

(f) Do central boards repair or suggest repairs or renovations to the schools?

In this case thirty-three out of a total of thirty-four boards indicated that central boards did act in this capacity.

(g) Does the unit board carry out or act on such suggestions?

Thirty unit boards indicated that they carried out suggestions made by the central boards.

(h) Does the central board in each area nominate janitors?

Twenty-nine unit boards indicated that central boards did. A number of unit boards added the qualification that a number of central boards recommended or nominated the janitors while the unit board hired them.

(i) Does the unit board act on such nominations?

Twenty-eight indicated that they did. This question was partially answered in the immediately-preceding section.

(j) Are central boards consulted in the planning and construction of new buildings?

Twenty-eight unit boards replied that central boards were consulted and involved in the planning and construction of new buildings.

(k) Do central boards have the authority to use, or allow to be used, school buildings for activities other than school activities?

Twenty-six unit boards had delegated this authority to the central boards.

(l) Do central boards in your area take an active interest in school activities such as Home and School, adult education, and in any others?

In twenty-six cases unit boards indicated that central boards were active in this capacity.

(m) Do central boards act in an advisory capacity to the unit

TABLE VI

CENTRAL BOARD DUTIES REPORTED BY UNIT BOARDS

Question	Responses Regarding Performance		Responses Regarding Desirability	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
(a)	26	8	32	2
(b)	21	13	28	6
(c)	24	10	26	8
(d)	21	13	22	12
(e)	23	11	25	9
(f)	33	1	34	0
(g)	30	4	34	1
(h)	29	5	30	4
(i)	28	6	28	6
(j)	28	6	28	6
(k)	26	8	26	8
(l)	26	8	32	2
(m)	33	1	34	0
(n)	33	1	34	0

board in problems pertaining to their respective schools?

Of the thirty-four boards, thirty-three replied in the affirmative.

(n) Is such advice of value in solving problems and improving educational facilities and conditions in the centralized schools?

Here again, thirty-three unit boards agreed that this was so.

Unit boards were generally agreed that central boards should have responsibility referred to in each item of this section of the questionnaire.

PART E

This section of the questionnaire was more general in nature. Respondents were invited to "write in" information which they had not otherwise been able to supply in previous sections of the questionnaire. Only a few central boards offered additional information but unit boards did take extensive advantage of the opportunity.

Central Board Replies

The comments and replies made by central boards were general in nature. The central themes of their comments were extracted and are paraphrased as follows:

1. The central board has no authority to do anything but make suggestions.
2. The unit board should give greater consideration to suggestions made by the central boards.
3. The central board should have a greater voice in financial matters pertaining to central schools.

4. The duties and responsibilities of central boards should be clearly defined in the school act.

5. They wished to have more responsibility for the control and maintenance of school buses.

The comments were significant in that the central boards expressed their desire to have more influence in the operation of their respective schools. Acting in an advisory capacity was considered important by most central boards. At the same time, they indicated that unit boards should give greater consideration to opinions and suggestions made by central boards.

Unit Board Replies

Unit boards made numerous observations and comments to this part of the questionnaire. The theme of their comments are listed as follows:

1. Central boards take an active part in planning and supervising bus routes in cooperation with the sub-unit trustee concerned.

2. Central boards are in a good position to recommend since they are in close contact with the situation at hand.

3. Central boards help maintain interest at the local level in the schools which their children attend.

4. Without the central boards, local interest in the operation of the schools would be even less.

5. Unit boards generally considered that bus routes and their organization and supervision should be one of the main activities of central boards.

6. The most important function of central boards was the advisory function. Unit boards agreed that this was invaluable in providing good services to the centralized schools.

7. All unit boards were of the opinion that relationships which existed between central boards and unit boards were satisfactory.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND COMMENTS

This final chapter summarizes the information presented in the preceding chapter and presents comments regarding the implications of the findings.

SUMMARY

Central boards varied in size from five to twenty members. Sixty-seven per cent of responding central boards indicated memberships of seven to eleven members. Approximately sixteen per cent had fewer members and seventeen per cent had more.

Various methods were used in selecting board membership. Two of the most frequently used methods were:

1. Choosing one trustee from each local board in the larger attendance area.
2. Choosing one representative from each rural district in the larger attendance area.

The major initiating force leading to the establishment of the typical central board came from local district school boards. Seventy per cent of the responding unit boards indicated that central boards were formed at the request of local school district boards. Of the reporting school boards, twenty-two per cent indicated that they had been the initiating force behind central board formation. In a few cases only were local ratepayers the initiating force in the establishment

of central boards.

The number of central boards within any larger unit of administration varied from one to twelve. The majority of units (approximately sixty per cent) contained from three to six central boards within their boundaries.

Eighty-two per cent of the unit and central boards indicated that central boards performed duties set out in Sec. 114, the School Act. Eighty-two per cent of the central boards also indicated involvement in other duties not specifically set out in the Act. Generally speaking, unit boards were content that central boards should assume such duties. In only a few cases did unit boards designate duties such as to make or arrange for minor repairs to school property.

Central boards did perform a host of tasks within their respective areas. Respondents from both unit and central boards were in agreement regarding the activities of central boards. By and large, central boards took an active part in the operation of their schools. They made decisions on the use of school property for educational and other purposes. They also nominated and recommended teachers, janitors, and bus drivers for employment by the unit board. Central boards apparently were given some responsibility in the matter of buses and bus routes. This function was both supervisory and advisory in nature and, according to unit board responses, was considered an asset to unit boards in the operation and maintenance of school transportation facilities.

The advisory function of central boards was much appreciated by unit boards. Suggestions and recommendations by central boards were

usually accepted by unit boards in the formation of policy and in making decisions.

The power to collect and spend monies was limited to a few of the responding boards. Three central boards reported that financial aid in the form of grants was available to them. Where such funds were available, the amounts were relatively small. Amounts ranged from twenty-five to fifty dollars for each central board. These grants were provided by the unit boards.

In one case, a central board was permitted to make a one-half mil levy on the school districts within the centralization. This had to be done with the approval of the unit board. The use of the tax revenue was limited to activities for which the unit board did not otherwise provide funds. In this way one central board was able to provide extra equipment for its school.

COMMENTS

Central boards were formed in a number of ways. In eighteen units, central board membership was drawn from local board membership. This would indicate that local boards still existed in a number of rural non-operating districts and that they were seen to be useful by ratepayers. Coupled with the fact of initiative taken predominantly by non-unit personnel, the findings suggest a lasting desire by ratepayers to be involved in affairs of the school attended by their children.

In the thirty-four units, a total of ninety-six central boards existed of which all except two had been formally approved by the Minister

of Education. The legislation governing their creation seemed to have systemmatized a previously informal situation. There was a strong indication that unit boards saw a purpose to the existence of central boards. An interesting finding was, however, that the majority of unit board had not initiated formation of central boards. To the contrary, nearly eighty per cent of central boards had been formed as a result of pressures by residents or the local boards of larger attendance areas.

The possibility that unit boards only tolerated central boards rather than accepted them in active partnership was suggested by indications of the relationship between them. In approximately seventy-five percent of the cases, unit boards had not initiated developments of central board duties. In a number of cases, however, central boards had assumed duties beyond those prescribed in the Act, apparently with the knowledge and tacit consent of unit boards. In only a few cases did central boards receive any funds from unit boards.

As stated earlier, Section 114, the School Act, governed the duties of the majority of central boards. There was a high degree of coincidence, consequently, between the duties of central boards as seen by them and as seen by unit boards. Both central and unit boards indicated that Section 114 contained generally suitable terms to guide central board operations.

Central board responses suggested that at least a few central boards would have preferred to change their degree of responsibility for any given duty, whereas unit boards tended to judge the situation that existed as being largely satisfactory. This suggests that the relationship

between a particular unit board and its central boards should partially be a matter of arrangement between them.

Unit boards recognized the value of central boards for purposes of advising, recommending, and as a means of maintaining local interest in schools. Their greatest value was seen by unit boards to lie in their general advisory function. Unit boards thought that existing relationships were satisfactory.

Central boards recognized their advisory function but thought they should be more influential. The feeling existed that advice was frequently not followed. In fact, central boards wished for more authority to act on specific issues, to have more control over expenditures in local schools, and to assume major responsibilities particularly in managing bus routes and operations.

An interesting question is suggested by the findings. The advisory function seems inadequate to satisfy central boards, but the final authority to make decisions generally must rest with the unit board. Can greater policy-making powers and matching powers of decisions be extended by unit boards to central boards? This question may have to be pursued to determine whether central boards can assume status of a locally-satisfying nature.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE TO CENTRAL BOARDS

QUESTIONNAIRE TO CENTRAL BOARDS

This questionnaire is to be completed by the CENTRAL BOARD as a whole. Please answer all parts to the best of your knowledge.

PART A.

Name of centralized school district _____

Address _____

Number of members on the board _____

Year central board was formed _____

PART B. Formation of CENTRAL BOARD

In indicating the manner in which the central board was formed, place a check mark in the appropriate box.

(a) Choosing one representative from each rural district represented in the larger attendance area. _____

(b) Choosing one trustee from each local board in the larger attendance area. _____

(c) Choosing the chairman from each local board in the larger attendance area. _____

(d) Election by ratepayers in each school district within the larger attendance area. _____

(e) Other means not mentioned, specify. _____

(f) In the formation of your central board, did the request for formation come from (check one)

(i) the ratepayers . . . . . _____
(ii) the local school boards . . . _____
(iii) suggested by the Unit Board . . _____
(iv) other (specify) . . . . . _____

.2.

PART C. Duties and powers of central boards

Complete this section by circling YES or NO in each case.

(a) Did the Larger Unit Board designate specific duties and responsibilities to the central board? yes no

(b) Are the duties and powers of the central boards governed by Sec. 114, The School Act? yes no

(c) Has the central board any specific area of responsibility or power? yes no

If so, what? _____

(d) Has the central board access to any funds to be used at its discretion? yes no

If so, where or how are these obtained?

(i) Grant from Unit Board _____ How much _____

(ii) Special levy _____ How much _____

(iii) Other _____ How much _____

PART D. Duties Performed by the Central Board

The central board will answer the following by placing YES or NO in the first blank if the situation described actually exists, and YES or NO in the second blank if in the opinion of the central board the situation should or should not ideally exist.

	Actual	Ideal
(a) Does the central board hold regular meetings?	_____	_____

.3.

	Actual	Ideal
(b) Are members of the Unit Board invited and informed of meetings?	____	____
(c) Does the board hold meetings in accordance with the School Act?	____	____
(d) Does the board visit the school regularly to ascertain the needs of your school?	____	____
(e) Does the board nominate teachers for your school?	____	____
(f) Does the Unit Board respect these nominations?	____	____
(g) Does the board nominate bus drivers serving your school?	____	____
(h) Does the Unit Board retain drivers thus nominated?	____	____
(i) Does the board repair and suggest repairs to school property?	____	____
(j) Does the board nominate the janitor for the centralized school?	____	____
(k) Does the Unit Board act upon such nominations?	____	____
(l) Does the board specify and order supplies and equipment?	____	____
(m) Do you as a board provide extra playground facilities over and above that supplied by the Unit?	____	____

.4.

	Actual	Ideal
(n) Do you as a board participate in planning new buildings and school sites?	____	____
(o) Do you control school property with respect to the use of same for community activities?	____	____
(p) Do you as a board provide leadership in the larger attendance area in such activities as Home and School, adult education, etc.?	____	____
(q) Does your board act in an advisory capacity to the Unit Board?	____	____
(r) Does the Unit Board generally act on advice from the central board?	____	____

PART E. Comments

List any other activities you as a central board ACTUALLY perform that are not listed.

List any other activities or functions you feel you as a central board should be responsible for or ideally perform.

Additional comments.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNIT BOARDS

QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNIT BOARDS

This questionnaire is to be completed by the Larger School Unit Board as a whole.

Answer each part of the questionnaire as indicated.

PART A. General Information

Name of School Unit _____ No. _____

Address _____

PART B. Establishment of Central Boards.

(a) How many central boards are established within the boundaries of your Unit? _____

(b) How many of these central boards are legally constituted, that is with the approval of the Minister of Education? _____

(c) In case some were not, do you concur in the establishing of these boards? _____

(d) In the above cases, did the request that a central board be established come from:

(i) the ratepayers . . . . . _____

(ii) the local school boards . . . . . _____

(iii) suggested by Unit Board . . . . . _____

(iv) other (specify) . . . . . _____

PART C. Powers of Central Boards

Answer YES or NO. Circle one.

.2.

(a) Did the Unit Board designate powers and specific responsibilities to the central boards? yes no

(b) Are the duties and powers of the central boards governed by the School Act? yes no

(c) Has the central board access to any funds to be used at its discretion? yes no

(d) Has the central board any area of specific responsibility? yes no

(e) Does the Unit Board provide a grant to the operating central boards to be used at their discretion? yes no

If so, how much? _____

PART D. Duties of Central Boards

The Unit Board will answer the following by placing YES or NO in the first blank if the situation described actually exists, and YES or NO in the second blank if in the opinion of the Board the situation should or should not ideally exist.

	Actual	Ideal
(a) Does the central board hold regular meetings?	____	____
(b) Are members of the Unit Board informed or invited to such meetings?	____	____
(c) Do central boards nominate teachers for their respective schools?	____	____

.3.

	Actual	Ideal
(d) Do central boards nominate bus drivers serving their respective areas?	____	____
(e) Does the Unit Board consider these nominations when selecting such personnel?	____	____
(f) Do central boards repair or suggest repairs or renovations to the schools?	____	____
(g) Does the Unit Board act on or carry out such suggestions?	____	____
(h) Does the central board in each area nominate janitors?	____	____
(i) Does the Unit Board act on such nominations?	____	____
(j) Are central boards consulted in the planning and construction of new buildings?	____	____
(k) Do central boards have the authority to use or allow to be used, school buildings for activities other than school activities?	____	____
(l) Do central boards in your area take an active interest in school activities such as Home and School, adult education, etc.?	____	____
(m) Do central boards act in an advisory capacity to the Unit Board in problems pertaining to their respective schools?	____	____

.4.

	Actual	Ideal
(n) Is such advice of value in solving problems and improving educational facilities and conditions in the centralized schools?	____	____

PART E. Comments

(a) In the opinion of the Unit Board, are there any activities or functions that the central boards do or might do that are not listed here? If so, please comment.

(b) Do central boards do things they would be better off not doing? If so, please comment.

(c) In the opinion of the Unit Board, what is the actual working relationship between the central board and the Unit Board? Comment freely.

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